

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) issued a favorable decision endorsing SBC Pacific Bell's long distance application on September 19, 2002. The next approval lies within the purview of the FCC. My hope is that SBC Pacific Bell will be able to offer long distance services to Californians by the end of the year.

&#61607; With SBC Pacific Bell's entry into long distance, the market will be truly open and fully competitive - and will benefit California consumers by offering savings, convenience, easy to understand calling plans, responsive customer service and the convenience and value of one-stop shopping for all telecommunications services.

&#61607; SBC Pacific Bell's entry into the long distance market comes at a time when the nation's telecommunications industry is in significant turmoil. Competition in the industry is now the norm, and it is necessary for regulators to apply fair and balanced rules to all providers in order to ensure that competition is based upon investments, technology, and sound business practices. An open and competitive telecommunications market will benefit every Californian.

&#61607; The CA PUC has taken far too long to give SBC Pacific Bell approval for its long distance application - over four years. The CPUC has overseen an unprecedented series of filings, workshops, audits, re-filings, tests and hearings - all designed to ensure SBC Pacific Bell has complied with the 1996 Telecommunications Act's requirement to open the local market to competitors. The marketplace is clearly open as companies across the state are offering consumers a wide variety of services - including local telephone service.

&#61607; To date, the FCC has approved applications from 23 states. Over 141 million Americans are experiencing the benefit of a full, open telecommunications market - and Californians want and deserve these benefits too.

&#61607; We are dismayed that the long distance entry process for SBC Pacific Bell has taken so long when other states have opened the door to long distance competition.

&#61607; People Basics has had a long-term relationship with SBC Pacific Bell - the company has been a good, solid corporate citizen; it makes positive contributions to the state and our local economic efforts, and its employees are involved in the communities in which they live and work.

Please act in behalf of the California residents and quickly approve SBC Pacific Bell's application to provide long distance service. We appreciate your rapid and positive decision on this matter. Thank you.